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The Shape of Things

MR. TRUMAN'S APPEAL FOR LESS WASTE OF food has now been supplemented by the Harriman committee's suggestion of "self-rationing" of meat, butter, and eggs. Neither proposal measures up to the problem of balancing the world's food budget. Cold statistics in the report of the Cabinet food committee, issued last week, show how desperately serious that problem has become following the partial failure of the corn crop in this country. Although bad harvests in Europe mean greater need than ever, the committee feels unable to recommend the export of more than 470,000,000 bushels of grain in 1947-48—20 per cent less than last year's shipments. Yet, even if other surplus areas expand exports as much as the committee hopes, the gap between available supplies and minimum needs of the food-deficit countries will still be 4,500,000 tons in terms of grain alone. Just about double that amount of wheat, it is estimated, will be fed to animals in this country during the next twelve months. As long as the American public is prepared to pay present prices and maintain its consumption of meat at a level far above the pre-war average, farmers will find it profitable to fatten their beasts on wheat instead of selling it for export. Something like ten pounds of grain—enough to keep a European alive for over a week—is required to "make" a pound of steak or pork chops. If facts like these are sufficiently publicized, many people may be expected to cut down consumption of such foods. Voluntary action of this kind will be all to the good. But we doubt very much whether even the reduced export progam advocated by the Cabinet committee will be achieved unless more stringent measures are taken to keep bread grains out of the feeding troughs.

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SENATOR TAFT'S FOREIGN-POLICY SPEECH was a remarkably eclectic performance, having in it a fair amount of Hoover, a bit of Wallace, and even a dash of Vishinsky, but with enough in contradiction to all these to leave it essentially a Taft product. Like Hoover, the Senator thinks we have been much too harsh on the Germans, who, within liberal bounds, should be freed at once to develop their economy, with no further denazification nonsense on our part. He believes that "our one justification" for entering the war was the belief that "German success would ultimately threaten our own freedom," but "we face a condition in the world today not much less threatening than existed in 1940." The menace does not come from the Soviet Union, as one might have anticipated. Taft does not believe that "Russia intends, or desires, a conquest by force of arms of additional territory" or that it would "give serious consideration" to a fighting war. The threat comes from communism, from which "we face a curious form of aggression." And how are we to combat it? Not economically. Loans, limited to specific countries and for specific purposes—and to our specific advantage—might be "helpful," but "let us not overestimate the power of money." Neither do we meet the threat by military power. Taft makes a sly dig at potential rival Eisenhower, suggesting in Wallace-like language that our military establishment is already inflated "unless we want to fight the Russian millions in their own backyard." As for the United Nations approach, Taft is for it, but he holds with Vishinsky that abandoning the veto is out of the question. Moreover, "the battle of ideologies" must be fought out "in each country by the people of that country." In the end, then, the Taft foreign policy is twofold: "maintenance of peace so long as conditions do not threaten" our own country, and a showdown on communism here at home, with special attention to the New Dealers, who have been trying "to move our system well over toward that of Russia."

*

THE FIRST OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE Spanish underground, noted briefly in American papers last week, furnishes new evidence that the Resistance movement is gaining impetus in Spain. It spoke of an "engagement with Franco forces in the M. [Madrid] zone in which the latter suffered casualties." According to the full text, this was "the first open battle with government troops." The document was signed by the "Chief of Staff of the Madrid Zone" and ended with an appeal to the United Nations to consider the incident as a new phase in the "fight of the Spanish people to overthrow Franco's fascist tyranny." The Spanish question is again on the agenda of the General Assembly. But should the U. N. fail to take the necessary diplomatic and economic steps to end the Franco dictatorship, the

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Spanish masses are clearly determined to continue the fight alone. At the very moment the Army of Liberation opened fire in the M. zone, the surprising announcement came from London that Foreign Secretary Bevin had agreed to receive an anti-Franco leader. But the surprise was short-lived, for the leader turned out to be Indalecio Prieto. A few weeks ago, Señor Prieto issued a manifesto in which he declared "with deep regret in my heart, I lay down the Republican flag." He defended his cynical renunciation of the Republic on the ground that it would open the way for a government that might win support in London and Washington, and take its place in the Western bloc against Russia. His declaration has aroused a storm of Republican protest that reaches even into his own group; Enrique de Francisco, chairman of the Prieto Socialists, immediately resigned. It will be interesting to see whether Mr. Bevin accepts Prieto's generous offer to sell out the Republic or goes on backing Francisco Franco.

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INFLATION IS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT WHO drains the value out of your dollar while you sleep. But the robber can be controlled, even in conditions of scarcity which are supposed to be most favorable to his depredations. The British Information Service recently sent out a report on the cost of living in "Austerity Britain" which is enough to make an American housewife go Socialist. Here are a few prices in American terms:

Beef (British ribs), per lb.	27c
Bread, per 3½-lb. loaf	18c
Butter, per lb.	28c
Eggs, each	3c

According to a mass poll just completed by the Ministry of Food, the average person in Britain today spends only $2.23 for food per week. This figure, in so far as it indicates the scant supply, is pathetic; in so far as it indicates the efficiency with which prices have been kept down, is, to say the least, impressive.

✶

THANKS TO A DETERMINED ARCHBISHOP and to the C. I. O., Negro segregation has received severe jolts in the cities of St. Louis, Missouri, and Gary, Indiana. In both cases, white parents refused to expose their children to the conjured-up dangers of attending school with children of a different color, and, in both cases, organizational discipline was invoked to bring them to their senses. The school strike in Gary was opposed by church groups and others, as Paul Klein points out in his article on page 335, but it was the threat of United Steelworkers union leaders to take action against participating members that broke the back of the movement. Today, the city's mayor, Joseph E. Finerty, boasts

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that Gary, with a population one-fifth Negro, "does not offer partial citizenship to anyone." The St. Louis affair was confined to Catholics, a number of whom were incensed at a parochial ruling admitting Negro children to diocesan high schools. When these practicing Catholics but non-practicing Christians threatened to enforce their racist ideas by court injunction, Archbishop Joseph Ritter countered with a threat of excommunication. The legal approach has now been abandoned and, in its place, an appeal is being made to the Most Reverend Amleto Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. It will be up to him to rule on the Archbishop's insistence on "the equality of every soul before Almighty God." Should he uphold the Archbishop, the State of Missouri might do well to ponder this novel concept in connection with its public schools, which are strictly segregated.

*

THE SUDDEN AUTUMN CAUGHT A LOT OF women with their skirts down. It also cut short the silly season, but there are a few silly-season items which should be preserved. There was, for instance, the announcement, on July 27, of a rule prohibiting profanity in the army. It was promulgated by General Jacob L. Devers, commander of Army Ground Forces. By this time, we are sure, he has become a four-letter general. . . . On August 27, when the summer had really become unbearable, the press carried an account of the Three-Corner Bathroom, the latest achievement of the American standard of living. "Father shaves while Susie bathes and mother makes up." No faucets—"water temperature is determined by quick and skilful foot work"—sliding mirrors, and ingenious lighting arrangements. In certain quarters, this was taken as further evidence that, given mirrors and quick and skilful footwork, there would be plenty of room for a third party. . . . The weather had turned when the United Nations Assembly opened. But *Pravda's* reports by the two journalists, Izakov and Zhukov, of Vishinsky's battle with the warmongers sounded, for all the world, like another episode from the summer's most extravagant movie, "The Secret Life of Walterevich Mittyakov."

The dinner of the Nation Associates on October 13, announced in detail on page 340 of this issue, will deal directly with the clash of policies and interests involved in the Palestine debate. A successful gathering will certainly influence the course of events at Lake Success. Your reservation at $50 per person is your investment in the Nation Associates' campaign for a decent solution in Palestine. We urge Nation *readers who can afford it to contribute their money and their presence.*

A Moment for Courage

PIECEMEAL assistance to Europe, said Secretary Marshall at Harvard on June 5, was a palliative rather than a cure for that Continent's economic ills. Therefore, he summoned the European nations to join together in drawing up an integrated recovery program which would make clear what further American aid was required after all possibilities of self-help were exhausted.

This challenge was accepted with alacrity by sixteen Western European powers and, in a remarkably short time, their representatives have agreed unanimously on a program which is a great deal more than "a shopping list." The report just issued in Paris includes a pledge by the participating countries to mobilize all their resources to reach the production targets laid down in the plan and to cooperate in promoting the economic recovery of the whole group. Specifically, they undertake, jointly and severally, to restore cereal production to its pre-war level by 1951, and to increase other major food crops. Coal output is to be raised to one-third more than the current figure, or 30,000,000 tons above the 1938 level. The plan also provides for an impressive expansion of power-generating and oil-refining capacity, for large additions to inland transport facilities, for the restoration of pre-war merchant fleets, and for an increase in steel production of 20 per cent over 1938.

The report recognizes very frankly that the success of the program depends on restoration of internal economic and financial stability. All the participating countries are suffering from some degree of inflation, though the pressure varies widely. Reduction of the money supply by fiscal and other measures, so as to bring it into balance with the supply of goods, is an urgent need, and the participants pledge themselves to seek this objective by ending deficit financing as soon as possible.

This is a necessary first step toward European cooperation. As the report says, "The instability of any country affects the participating countries as a whole, for it hampers and distorts trade and prevents the affected countries from making their full contribution to the recovery program." Mutual help through the interchange of goods is a vital part of the program, and in Paris considerable progress was made toward meshing the production programs of the different countries. In the field of power, a definite plan emerged for the joint exploitation of hydroelectric resources cutting across frontiers. Provision was also made for encouraging standardization of certain kinds of equipment, for the interchange of information on steel programs, and for exploring the possibilities of a freight-car pool. What is much more important, a tentative approach, at least, was made to the creation of a customs union for Western Europe. This is a logical, we might say inevitable,

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step, if Europe is to survive and prosper. As the report says, in quoting the remarkable declaration of the French government: "In the present state of the world, only economic units sufficiently large to have at their disposal an important home market are able to lower the price of industrial and agricultural production sufficiently to insure . . . an improved standard of living for their people." But strong as are the arguments for the formation of a large free-trade area in Europe, there are formidable obstacles to its realization, such as Britain's commitments to the dominions and the unwavering hostility of the U. S. S. R. to any continental integration not under its auspices. It is something, therefore, that a majority of the sixteen nations have agreed to set up a study group to examine further the possibility of a customs union.

Whatever hopes this step may hold for the future, Europe's immediate need is rescue from the threat of economic collapse. The Paris report shows clearly that every phase of the recovery program is dependent on outside aid. It will not be possible to raise production in accordance with the plan without large imports of food and raw materials. As the report puts it, every element in the program " depends upon the others—mining machinery upon steel, steel upon coal, coal upon food—and in turn depends on the availability of supplies from overseas in the right quantities and at the right times."

THE challenge that Marshall made to Europe comes back, therefore, as a challenge to us. After making all possible allowances for self-help and mutual aid, the sixteen countries prove the need of minimum aid from the United States of $19.31 billion over the next four years, plus more than $3 billion in equipment loans from the International Bank. This is a large sum, in relation to anything but the cost of a war, but the objective to be achieved—the salvation of Western Europe from catastrophe—is surely not of trivial importance to the American people.

Unfortunately, timid and unimaginative leadership is tending to obscure the issues involved. The President, fearful of Congress and with division in his Cabinet, greeted the Paris report as interesting but not urgent, although at the very same time he admitted that there *were* emergency European economic problems that called for immediate action. In fact, these emergency problems are only the most angry symptoms of the larger ills for which the Paris program offers a cure. They should be treated, but let us remember that such treatment is another palliative. The real cure for Europe will start with a firm commitment by Congress to finance the Paris program; that will help to give the patient the confidence which is the first essential for recovery. Grudging doles may satisfy our charitable instincts and help to keep some Europeans from starvation, but they will do nothing to aid European recovery. They will merely mean continuation of the "piecemeal" policies which Secretary Marshall has so rightly deplored.

Watch Mr. Marshall

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

AS THE debate on Palestine develops in the special committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Evatt, I urge *Nation* readers to keep their eye fixed on the United States delegation. Nothing that has happened in Jerusalem or Whitehall or the corridors of the United Nations alters the basic realities of the case: they are still what they were last spring when Britain first submitted the issue to the General Assembly. "In the end what is decided about Palestine in the U. N.," I wrote in *The Nation* of April 26, "will depend upon this country. . . . The rise of America's oil empire in the Middle East has shifted the balance of interest and with it the weight of responsibility. Britain is still there, but the United States has moved in too. And the Truman Doctrine, about to find its first overt expression in Greece and Turkey, applies with equal force throughout the Middle East. Greece is a frontier post, but Palestine is a major bastion of the new empire of oil."

From the London angle, Harold Laski analyzes the situation much the same way in the special supplement published with this issue. Mr. Bevin, he says, will never create a "vacuum" in the Middle East; if Britain moves out of Palestine, it will be because the United States is prepared to move in. For American policy at this moment is easy to define: "All over the world the United States is organizing what forces it can manipulate in an all-out effort to prevent the expansion of Russian power. As part of that effort predominance in the Middle East is essential. . . ."

ONLY with this background clearly in mind can one make sense of the day-by-day maneuvers at Lake Success: Britain's announcement of its intention to surrender the Palestine mandate, America's equivocal silence, the Arab threats, the rumors surrounding Mr. Marshall's private talks with Arab leaders and with the Jewish Agency. An atmosphere of ambiguity and unease hangs over the whole question.

The British statement, delivered by the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Creech-Jones, last Friday, was a gift horse whose every tooth is being minutely examined. It is an almost appallingly shrewd and disarming document, luring the skeptic into traps contrived by his own well-grounded suspicions. Britain, said Mr. Creech-Jones, indorses "without reservation" the proposal of the U. N. committee on Palestine that the mandate should be terminated; Britain will not "try to prevent" a settlement

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recommended by the Assembly; Britain will put such a recommendation into effect if Jews and Arabs agree to it, but otherwise will plan to withdraw its forces from Palestine at an "early" date and "some alternative authority" will have to carry out the Assembly's decision. Arabs and Jews here and in Palestine registered profound disbelief when they heard the news, and several remarked that Britain's refusal to "impose" a solution in Palestine was at least odd in view of its recent policy of force. But a careful reading of the statement inclines me to accept its literal veracity—interpreted in terms of the world situation and the Truman Doctrine.

Why should Britain, broke and short of man-power, go on supporting the economic burden of a big military and administrative establishment? Why should the Labor government continue to suffer the liabilities resulting from police rule and mounting losses among British troops in Palestine? Why should it invite any longer the attacks of its own left wing as well as the hostility of a large section of American opinion? How much better to deposit the unwanted offspring of Tory imperialism on the doorstep of the U. N., secure in the knowledge that, if necessary, it will be adopted and brought up by the United States, which would never expose the foundling to the hazards of Arab politics and Soviet ambitions. Read Laski: there will be no political vacuum in the Middle East. As for Britain's offer to implement any recommendation acceptable to both Jews and Arabs, it carries no penalties; no plan yet suggested has satisfied both peoples.

DOES this analysis of the British proposal imply American collaboration? Has the State Department already promised to adopt the Palestine baby as it did the miserable Greek orphan? Have we agreed to pick up all Britain's by-blows in the eastern Mediterranean? If so, one must assume that Mr. Marshall has fully accepted the views of his chief advisers on the Middle East, George Wadsworth and Loy Henderson, who for years have urged the necessity of winning Arab goodwill through the generous use of loans, gifts, royalties, and opposition to a Jewish Palestine.

Friends of the Secretary have insisted that he favored the Palestine policy of the President; that he believed a solution meeting the legitimate demands of the Jews was fully compatible with American security. His guarded comment on the UNSCOP report was attributed to a desire not to bring pressure on the Assembly. Such an attitude would obviously have found warm support in the White House. Mr. Truman's honest and outspoken wish that displaced European Jews be admitted into Palestine is buttressed by his knowledge of the sure political consequences of an anti-Jewish decision. The anger that would boil up among liberal and Jewish groups over a double-cross by the United States is a fact not likely to be ignored by the Democratic high command.

But today one cannot afford to put too much stock in the preferences of statesmen or even the calculations of candidates. Today, foreign policy is determined by the strategy of "containing" Russia; the decision on Palestine will be based, not on precedent or promises, but on such factors as the reality of the Arab threat to American oil supplies and pipe lines, the possibility of holding the area in case of war with Russia (some military experts believe the oil reserves could not be defended), the question of Russian participation in a U. N.-controlled interim government in Palestine. Today, foreign policy is made in the departments of State and Defense, not in the White House; and it is made mostly by military men and bankers whose interest in the political fate of Mr. Truman and the Democratic Party is scarcely noticeable. Even the public reaction to the Palestine policy finally announced will concern them only so far as it is reflected in Congress when the decision comes up for approval and implementation.

Secretary Marshall's discussions with Arabs and Jews were off the record, but this much is known: he was impressed by the chiefs of the five Arab delegations and very short with the representatives of the Jewish Agency. According to rumor—and Drew Pearson—after his meeting with the Arabs, Mr. Marshall persuaded the President that we could not afford to back a policy which would rouse their antagonism.

Is the story true? If it is, if Mr. Truman and Mr. Marshall have decided to reject the UNSCOP report, we may see a fantastic reversal of roles at Lake Success. The British can step to one side and let the Americans, for a change, defend the claims of the Arabs and the sanctity of oil. They can let our team search for a plan that will satisfy the Mufti and Ibn Saud, command a two-thirds' majority in the Assembly, and entice appropriations from a Republican Congress—while Mr. Bevin comfortably prepares to display almost immaculate hands in the House of Commons. Mr. Churchill himself might approve a liquidation of empire accomplished with such finesse.

The story may be false; it is still a rumor. But one would be quicker to reject it if circumstances did not give it plausibility. To yield to Arab threats is to follow the disastrous but forceful logic of the Truman Doctrine on into the Middle East.

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Politics and People

BY ROBERT BENDINER

A FRIENDLY correspondent in Mississippi advises me that Northern newspapers can be of great service to the liberals of that state if they will only refrain from attacking John Rankin as he campaigns for the Senate seat of the late Mr. Bilbo. The wisdom of this counsel is further borne out by John N. Popham, a New York *Times* reporter, who writes from Jackson that a good part of Bilbo's success at the polls in 1946 was due to "a statewide resentment against 'outside meddling.'" Having no wish to meddle, I hope sensitive Mississipians will not regard it as outside interference if I quote —merely as a matter of public interest and without approval or disapproval—an editorial from their own Jackson *Daily News*. If Mississippians, that paper says, are "to gain and hold the respect to which [they] are entitled," they must "quit sending to the halls of Congress hysterical rabble-rousers and spouting demagogues."

It cannot be assumed, of course, that just because the *Daily News* is supporting another candidate it had Mr. Rankin in mind when it spoke those harsh words. As evidence to the contrary, we are assured by Mr. Popham and others that Rankin is so genuinely gone on the mystic doctrine of white supremacy that the very depth of his conviction may lose him the nomination. Mr. Popham reports the view of some Mississippians that "many voters, white and Negro, saw a large measure of the mountebank in Mr. Bilbo and never took his rantings too seriously," while Rankin, on the other hand, "is locally credited with bringing to his white-supremacy precepts a 'sincerity and bitterness' that might well repel many voters who went along with Mr. Bilbo."

I am glad to give further publicity to this tribute to Mr. Rankin, though I fear it may cost him votes that he can ill afford. His Tupelo machine lost every courthouse office in the preliminary primary of the last election, but what is that to a man of principle? The American Federation of Labor is working hard in the current campaign, and it has hopes that Rankin will rate no higher than fourth in a field of five, provided Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson can bring themselves to maintain a discreet silence.

Just in passing, and without editorial comment, I hand along the additional information that Paul B. Johnson, Jr., whose father was a New Deal governor of the state, is thinking seriously of joining the growing Mississippi free-for-all. Without campaign funds Johnson ran up a vote of 112,000 in the last governorship primary almost solely on the strength of his eloquent pleas for social change. Like other Mississippians, he is a determined opponent of "Yankee interference," but he specializes in resenting the activities of outside corporations, like the oil, railroad, and power companies that poured money, rather than free advice, into Mississippi in order to elect their veteran lobbyist, Fielding Wright, to the governorship. State pride seemed curiously unaffected by this particular evidence of alien interest.

SOUTHERN politicians are eagerly awaiting the legal assault on what may turn out to be the last resort of pure-white suffrage. Keenly disappointed over the refusal of a South Carolina federal judge to sanction the "private primary," whereby the Democratic Party was to circumvent the law by becoming a private club, the diehards have been counting hopefully on a relatively new provision of Alabama's state constitution. Enacted in 1946, the clause provides that would-be voters must not only be able to read and write but also to "understand and explain" any section of the Constitution, with the local board of registrars to be the judges of their performance. No test is specified for the registrars, though it is assumed that they will generally be literate and always white.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People will put this "educational qualification" to a legal test in the near future. Should the verdict go against the NAACP, the Talmadge crowd, devoted as always to high educational standards, will press for a similar amendment in Georgia, and the device will certainly be urged throughout the South. If it is ruled out in Alabama, however, there will be nothing left but the poll tax, and that will be under a raking fire in Congress. The President's Committee on Civil Rights will soon bring in a strong recommendation for anti-poll-tax legislation, and the Republicans will be only too glad to push it, to the embarrassment of the Southern Democrats.

Negro leaders have reason to be hopeful. If they have any doubt that minorities make hay in an election year, they have only to look at the promptness with which Dewey, Taft, and Speaker Joe Martin have indorsed the majority report of the U. N.'s Special Committee on Palestine.

HAMILTON FISH is back and MacArthur's got him. The one-time isolationist leader is returning to what he hopes will be public life by way of a magazine entitled *Today's World*, of which he is editor and publisher. Fish's maiden editorial is an all-out attack on Thomas E. Dewey. Elsewhere in the magazine Dewey is blamed for Fish's downfall in 1944, when the Governor, it is charged, made a "racial issue" of the Congressman's kindly observation that a majority of New York's Jews would vote for Roosevelt. But in the editorial Fish confines himself to the loftier political argument that Dewey

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took no part in the recent war, though, as someone has been unkind enough to remark, at least he didn't oppose it.

Fish's sad experience in predicting has not lessened his prophetic urge. His present forecast is that General MacArthur will be nominated by acclamation at the Republican convention and will sweep the country, carrying all but four Southern states. Among the objectives of *Today's World* is the purpose "to debunk such radical propaganda sheets as . . . *The Nation.*" To this pastime Mr. Fish is surely entitled, turn-about being, as always, fair play.

Fair and Cooler

BY J. KING GORDON

Lake Success, September 26

THE weather has changed decidedly in the past week. The streaming days of New York's hottest summer have given way to bright, crisp autumn, with blue skies and a touch of frost in the air.

This brief meteorological note is obviously an introduction to the comment that in United Nations affairs the week has been much less hectic. The fervid oratory of the plenary session has given way to the more business-like work of the committees. Even Vishinsky's press conference yesterday and Gromyko's slashing attack on United States policy in Greece this afternoon failed to raise temperatures more than a degree or two.

EARLY in the week one incident occurred that deserves to be put on the record. Vishinsky had made an effective speech in the Assembly in favor of keeping the discussion of the revision of the Italian peace treaty off the agenda. He was followed by the delegate from Ethiopia. The ghost of the League of Nations appeared, the dim, shameful memory of the lonely figure of Haile Selassie as he tried in vain to impress that other assembly with the enormity of the Fascist crimes against his people. Now, in the new world organization, delegates listened in silence while a representative of the Ethiopian people carried them back to those early days of the first Fascist empire. He reminded them that Marshal Graziani, who in revenge for an attempted assassination had had shot down in cold blood five thousand innocent men, women, and children, was still unpunished. The Ethiopian delegate suggested that there were certain unpaid debts that should be attended to before any revision of the recently signed Italian treaty.

THE two committees that held the focus of attention were, naturally enough, the ad hoc committee on Palestine and the Political Committee, in which the Greek issue was the first item of business.

The only important contribution this week in the Palestine committee was the flat announcement by Britain's Colonial Secretary, Arthur Creech-Jones, that Britain intended to end the mandate; that it was not prepared to enforce any Assembly decision which was not accepted by both Jews and Arabs; and that, failing such acceptance, Britain was going to make an early withdrawal of its forces. While some skepticism was expressed about the date of British withdrawal, most delegates tended to take the statement at its face value—as meaning that Britain was through. The issue now appears to be squarely in the lap of the U. N., which must not only adopt a plan for Palestine but decide on the means of implementation. The solemn warning of Justice Sandstrom, when he appeared before the ad hoc committee, that in a sense "the Palestine problem is insoluble: no settlement will be entirely satisfactory to both parties," turned more and more eyes in the direction of the United States delegation. Mr. Marshall's statement in his opening speech that the United States "gave great weight" to the report of the special committee lost some of its early significance when it was learned that the Secretary of State had told both Arab and Jewish leaders that the United States had not yet made up its mind. It has been noticeable, by the way, that in several ballots in the Political Committee the Arab states abstained from voting when the Soviet bloc voted no.

WHEN the Greek question came up in the Political Committee, the American delegate, Herschel Johnson, made a strong attack, and on Saturday the Soviet delegate, Gromyko, counter-attacked. Johnson, after recapitulating the developments in this issue before the Security Council, introduced the resolution which was anticipated in the Marshall speech. The blame for the border incidents was placed squarely on Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania; the three states were called on to stop their aid to the Greek guerrillas; all four states were urged to cooperate to settle their differences. An Assembly committee was also to be established to see that these recommendations were complied with and to summon a special session of the Assembly if the situation made it necessary.

Gromyko's speech and resolution carried the war back into the American camp. It was the fascist character of the Greek government that was responsible for the border incidents and the civil war in Greece. All freedom-loving Greeks were on the side of the guerrillas.

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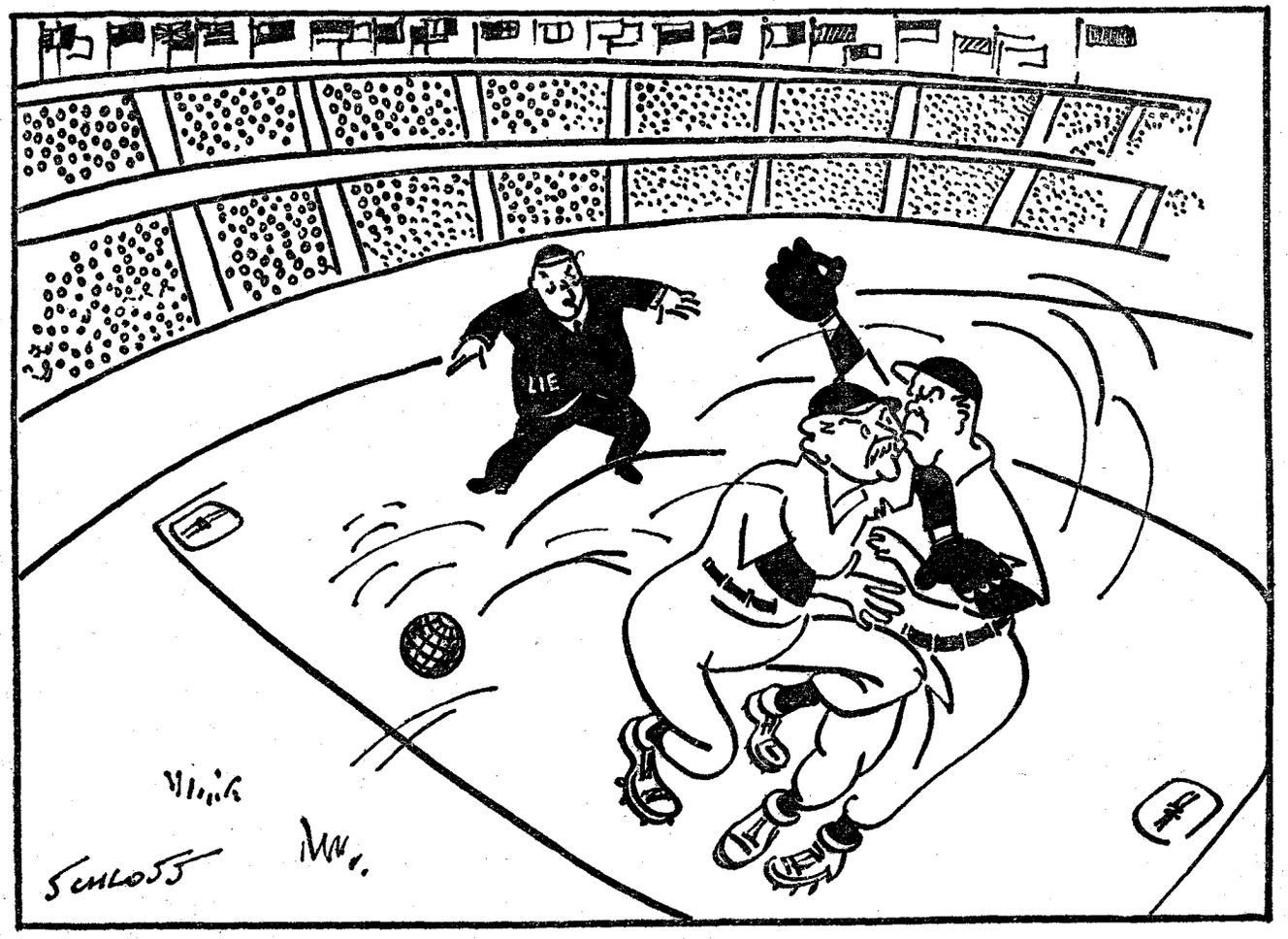
American military and economic aid was being used to repress democracy and bolster reaction. The Greek government should therefore be called upon to desist from provoking the border incidents; the Greeks should be asked to reconcile their differences peacefully with their northern neighbors; all foreign military forces should be withdrawn from Greece so that an independent democratic government might emerge; and an Assembly committee should be sent to Greece to see that economic aid was properly administered.

Most observers, discounting the greater part of the two speeches as propaganda for one side or the other, ask simply: can this power struggle be stabilized? Admitting that on Greece's northern frontier you have the dividing fence between two hostile giants, can some arrangement be arrived at so that they will not forever be getting into each other's hair. The Syrian delegate managed to shoot in a few sentences on Saturday when he said that everybody was getting pretty fed up with mutual recriminations and couldn't they be forgotten.

TO END on a more hopeful note, this morning Oscar Lange, delegate from Poland, made a significant speech which has been given strange play in the press. It is generally being interpreted as primarily an attack on the Marshall plan and on the tendency of the United States to by-pass the United Nations. It is true that Lange made this attack, and might well have taken to heart Bidault's reminder that Russia and the eastern group withdrew voluntarily from the Paris conference and that the sixteen-nation accord represented a scheme of economic cooperation which might apply to all Europe.

But as a matter of fact, Bidault, Masaryk, and Lange all emphasized the same point—that Europe must find the means for rebuilding its economic life as a cooperative undertaking. Lange stressed the fact that Eastern and Western Europe's economies were complementary and that for one section to attempt to rebuild itself without the other was to labor under an almost unbearable handicap. The Polish delegate pointed out—and it took courage to do so—that Poland had trade relations with all European countries except Greece, Spain, and Portugal, and also traded with England, the United States, Canada, Argentina, and other overseas countries. He said that whereas right after liberation Poland's exports to the U. S. S. R. amounted to 93.4 per cent of its total exports, in 1947 they were only 43 per cent.

In spite of the political conflict, economic logic is so strong that East and West are cooperating. Lange's words have found receptive ears, and many delegates are going to press the question: What more can the United Nations do to meet the needs of hungry peoples?



WORLD SERIOUS

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Hunger and Politics in Italy

BY MARIO ROSSI

Rome, September

WITH next spring's general elections in mind, much is being said and written in Italy today about Socialist unity. The Action Party executive's recent decision to conclude an agreement with the Italian Socialist Party for the unification of all Socialist forces in a strong independent movement has highlighted a problem that first received attention when De Gasperi excluded the left from the government and chose to rule with the support of the conservative forces in Parliament. The internal situation has been getting worse ever since, for the government has revealed its intention to favor the well-to-do classes at the expense of the workers through an economic policy which encourages inflation and is completely inadequate to provide food and work.

A clear warning that Italy is heading toward inflation is seen in the fact that paper-money circulation increased from 402 billion lire on June 30, 1946, to 584 billion lire on June 30, 1947, and has now reached 640 billion lire. Discussing these figures, the Communist *Umanità* points out that "they show one thing only—that in spite of all assurances to the contrary and of the inclusion of well-known technicians in a political Cabinet, the financial policy of the government has simply been one of printing more and more money." The newspaper says further, "Certain well-known interests have nothing to fear from inflation, which will help them to strengthen their political grip on the country."

Never before have Italian liberals felt so strongly that direction of the government must be transferred to a party with a workable plan of economic and political reconstruction. The Socialist Party is thought best fitted for this task, being the most democratic of the three mass parties and the most independent of foreign pressure. But while the Socialists are willing to assume political leadership, they could not form a government at the present moment. The Christian Democrats are still the strongest single party in the Constituent Assembly, and with their extremely flexible policy can always manage to get a majority of votes. To take the initiative away from the Christian Democrats, the Socialists will have to gain a victory next spring at the general elections, and this they cannot hope to do if their forces remain divided.

Imperative as unity is, it will not be achieved without strong pressure from the rank and file. When the split took place in January of this year, it was caused by the personal as well as political antagonisms among party leaders. Saragat and his friends alleged that the Socialist Party was subserviently following the Communist line, thus strengthening communism and weakening socialism. They proposed therefore to form a Socialist Party which, though not anti-Communist, would be free from Communist control. Other leaders had very different ideas. They said that the entente between the Socialists and Communists reflected the will of the working masses, and as proof they cited the last congress of the Italian General Confederation of Labor, at which the Italian Socialist Party received 1,037,866 votes as against 98,064 for the secessionists.

THE working people's thirst for unity is entirely understandable. They know that in a struggle with the left all conservative forces will fight as one man. Those forces are very strong. No division of the left can be tolerated so long as the right offers such a threat to the workers and farmers.

It is because they acknowledge the strength of the opposition that the Socialists have agreed to join all other progressive forces in a "popular front" at the elections, especially in those parts of Italy which are politically backward. In regions still terrorized by the "Mafia" and other gangsters serving the political interests of the land barons, citizens giving their votes to the left parties must always expect reprisals. A popular front would be a show of strength that would persuade the southern farmer he could vote for the party of his choice with impunity. The Communist Party has about two million members, representing with their families about one-fourth of the population. The Socialist Party has fewer members but can count on a large independent vote.

"Saragat's big mistake," a Socialist leader representing the right wing told me, "is to forget that ideologies are worthless if there is no force to back them up. In order to be independent of the Communists we should have to be actually stronger than they are. Recent events provide eloquent proof of what I say. At the Socialist Party congress held in Florence in June of last year the maneuvering and double talk of Saragat and his friends so discredited the party that a considerable number of workers, 100,000 according to *Avanti,* went over to the Communists. After the Rome congress of January, 1947, the split caused us to lose the presidency of the Constituent Assembly to a Communist and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to a Christian Democrat. The conservative and so-called independent press was overjoyed, and so was De Gasperi, who after two successive Cabinet crises

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was able to eliminate the left from the government. When a vote of confidence was asked for De Gasperi's 'black' government, nineteen out of fifty-four secessionist Socialist deputies abstained. This was clearly an invitation to De Gasperi to renounce the support of the right and form with them a left-of-center Cabinet which would exclude both the Communists and the regular Socialists. Now the Socialist Party has rallied its forces and is stronger than before the split. And what has Saragat achieved, besides strengthening the Communists and conservatives? His faction was refused recognition at the congress of European Socialist parties held in Zurich last June. And at the meeting of the General Confederation of Labor held about the same time he was repudiated by the workers. Nor has he been able to win the support of the middle class, which is not attracted by Marxist socialism." This sharp comment by a man who is certainly ideologically nearer to Saragat than to Nenni reveals the bitter feeling between the two factions.

Drawn from life by Ernesto Valentino

Pietro Nenni

THE Action Party's decision to conclude an agreement with the Socialists should have far-reaching results. "The ice has been broken," Italians say, and the problem of Socialist unity brought into the open, thus forcing the small parties to state their position.* The decision is all the more important because the Action Party has always been held in high esteem for its contribution to the Resistance and for the high moral and intellectual caliber of many of its members. The party's declaration of its intentions said that "the division of Socialist forces has offered the best opportunity to reactionary designs," and that only "a Socialist force which places itself at the center of Italian public life and assumes the direction of all democratic elements can change the present disequilibrium and give democracy a firm basis." The Action Party, with a few reservations, the statement continued, believes that the Italian Socialist Party is the most fitting instrument for the realization of "a vast and efficient Socialist concentration."

The decision was arrived at after many debates and hesitations. In fact, on January 27, shortly after the Socialist split, the Action Party executive proposed to join forces with the secessionists for the creation of an autonomous Italian Socialist Party. Parleys were immediately initiated and had almost accomplished their purpose when a congress of the Action Party on March 31 unanimously decided that no effective socialist policy could be achieved without the cooperation of the old Italian Socialist Party. Finally, after the Socialist Party had received international recognition and shown evidence of solid support among the workers, the Action Party decided to go over to it.

At the coming congress of the Action Party the decision of the executive will find both supporters and opponents. Some will join the Socialists, others Saragat's secessionists; the rank and file may even go over to the Republican Party. But whatever the result, the leaders of the Action Party had sense enough to understand that the time of small parties is over. A small party must either back one of the mass parties nearest to it ideologically or dissolve. Other small parties have quite understandably been disturbed by the precedent established by the Actionists. Their game has been to eat their cake and have it too: to fight the right but not to support the left. Now most of them realize that the moment has come when they must make their choice.

The secessionists, however, confident of popular support at the next elections, remain intransigent. Socialist unity, they agree, is all very well, provided it is formed around their party. "Without last January's split," Saragat recently wrote, "we would have in Italy two Communist parties and no Socialist Party. The struggle for Socialist unity under such conditions would have had no chance of success: under present conditions it can bank on a solid nucleus represented by our party." To which argument Lelio Basso, secretary of the Socialist Party, retorted, "Politically our party represents in Italy the only Socialist force that has roots in the working classes, and without them there is no socialism. Not to understand this, to admit that there might be a Socialist Party dissociated from the working class, means, according to us, not to be Socialists."

The party that is causing so much agitation, the Communist Party, ended a long period of neutrality in the feud between the two Socialist factions when Togliatti, in his last speech, sharply attacked the secessionists. Clearly, the Communists fear the formation of a De Gas-

* A U. P. dispatch from Rome dated September 24 reported that six leftist parties, including the Communists, had agreed to vote against De Gasperi on a confidence motion in the Assembly; since then the right-wing Socialist leader, Saragat, has modified his stand, and in one of the mildest "opposition" speeches ever heard in Italy announced his whole-hearted support of the Marshall plan. The Communists, majority Socialists, Actionists, and Labor Democrats demand representation of the left—including the Communists—in the government.—EDITORS THE NATION.

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peri-Saragat government and would oppose it vigorously. Such a government would be anti-Communist, and yet it would be difficult to label it "reactionary." The Communists would also dislike a Socialist Cabinet, because they are in competition with socialism. The perfect formula for them would be a Government of National Union, where many opposing forces would neutralize one another, thus giving the Communists greater power. They know that they have reached the apex of their strength and are now slowly declining.

The Gary School Strike

BY PAUL L. KLEIN

Gary, Indiana

STEEL sets the pattern"—not only in prices but in segregation. In 1906, when a United States Steel engineer laid out Gary, he thoughtfully plotted separate areas for Negroes and whites, and the Gary Land Company, a Steel subsidiary, enforced the policy. Gary now includes among its 130,000 citizens a higher proportionate number of Negroes than any other city north of the Mason and Dixon Line. Most of them were brought in by the steel companies.

Perhaps U. S. Steel fosters dissension between Negro and white workers in order to weaken the union; perhaps it would like the community to be occupied with racial conflicts while it quietly presses for its requested $10,000,000 local tax cut, which will raise the average family's burden $30 a year. Even if not guilty on these counts, U. S. Steel certainly created and has maintained the separateness and tension which three weeks ago flared once more into anti-Negro demonstrations. Race hatred has again hit the children of Gary. And make no mistake: it was the carefully nurtured property-devaluation bogy that scared up the Emerson School strike here.

White students in Gary have always attended the school in their home district; Negro pupils have been "allowed" to exercise an "option" to attend some other school. Last year the school board announced that, starting this fall, the "option" would be revoked for grammar-school students, and, later, for students of all ages.

As a result of the new policy, Emerson—with 1,800 students, the least crowded of all Gary's schools—was assigned thirty-eight colored children in grades up to the sixth. On opening day the high-school students struck. "No niggers for us!" they shouted. Immediately the school board declared it would stick to its ruling. For the first few days, while a few Negro-hating parents were injecting the children's ringleaders with fools' courage, the school authorities watched and waited; they took no action, but threatened legal steps against the delinquents' parents under Indiana's new anti-hate law and under laws against contributing to truancy. During this period public opinion was being mustered against the race bigots. Urged on by the League of Women Voters and the C. I. O. Steelworkers, most of the civic organizations supported the board. (I was told that the spokesman for U. S. Steel in the Chamber of Commerce tried last year to prevent the chamber from giving its approval.)

It is heartening to note that although individual members of an organization are sometimes opposed to democratic principles, the organizations themselves, under public scrutiny, can be forced to come out for right and justice. This was particularly true of the religious groups in Gary. While many ministers lifted no hand or word against the strikers, the Deanery (Catholic), the Ministerial Association (Protestant), and the Council of Churches all spoke out. Among other groups which stood up to be counted were the Anselm Forum, with members drawn from Gary's fifty-odd nationalities and religions, the Bar Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the A. V. C. (the Legion and V. F. W. were silent), the P. C. A. (there is no local A. D. A.), the Chamber of Commerce, and the Communist Party. Particularly notable was the stand of the Gary *Post-Tribune*, the town's only daily. In a municipal-election year this Republican voice firmly supported the non-segregation policy proclaimed by the Democratic administration —a fact which forced Steel's Republican candidate also to express his approval. Perhaps highest praise of all should go to Mayor Joseph E. Finerty. When informed months ago that the policy would make political trouble for him, Finerty decided not to run again in November, thus obtaining a free hand to implement his school board's decision.

The strike reached its peak on Friday of the first week. Over the week-end an arrest was made under the state law, subpoenas were issued to the parents of strikers, and by Monday students were beginning to return. During this time the board continued to issue subpoenas. "The policy sticks," it announced, "and you are violating the law by keeping your children out." The

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parents' strike committee hired a lawyer; he, too, told them they must send their children back. By the following Monday—two weeks after school's opening—attendance was again normal.

WHAT factor was most immediately responsible for the strike? It is interesting to note that at no time was there any violence against colored pupils; this reinforces the conviction of most observers that fear of property devaluation, not of classroom association, motivated the strikers and their parents. Furthermore, attempts to get other schools to walk out failed.

Somewhere at the root of the disturbance is a man called Louis C. Christopher, now running for mayor. Christopher has a long and unsavory record: he is a leader of the Serbian National Federation, which is allied with the Slovak League, known during the war for its pro-Nazi stand. He is alleged to have instigated the similar Froebel School strike here two years ago. The anti-Negro parents' committee, which has voted to perpetuate itself, is supporting Christopher's campaign for the mayoralty.

But attendance at committee meetings has dwindled, and funds are running low. Christopher seems to have no chance to be elected; nor is it likely that his intrusion into the race, as an independent, will throw the election to the steel industry's candidate. Counter-action has begun: the Steelworkers are about to launch a racial-education program, and other groups have similar plans. Moreover, in a few years the high schools, and later the electorate itself, will be composed of young men and women who are now children in the elementary grades and receiving a democratic, non-segregated education.

The most hopeful sign from Gary is that progressives have united to enforce a liberal policy. Also important, the bigots have been compelled to conduct the fight on the liberals' level, with legal and political weapons. But the fight is not yet won, and Gary cannot afford to relax.

La Guardia

BY JOSEPH LILLY

I BELIEVE LaGuardia is understood most clearly if he is looked at as a Westerner. His most malleable years were spent as an army kid at a frontier post in Arizona, when Arizona was yet territory and the age of legend was fresh enough to be indistinguishable from truth. Like Westerners he also loved the fight for its own sake, the rougher the merrier. When he was in Europe as a young consular clerk he looked back to Arizona, not New York. New York consciously came later. Though he was born on the lower East Side he seemed to me to love New York as do others who come here pursuing careers—as a prize, precious and wonderful.

So deeply did he feel for the Plains farmer that he was a leader of the farm bloc while still Representative from Manhattan. Last year he was presented to a howling crowd of Minnesota wheat growers by their spokesman as "the best Congressman Minnesota ever had," and everybody there understood and applauded. His big Stetson was a symbol of cow puncher and Congressman combined, whether he intended it so or not.

People often talked about his faults, perhaps because he not only declined to hide his faults but made them conspicuous, sometimes needlessly, deliberately, and wrongly. He wanted to be known accurately for what he was—no false colors. Nor did he conceal his deepest virtues. He spoke frankly of his love of domesticity, quiet, slippered domesticity, and its natural concomitant, children. He loved children unashamedly and without stint—all kinds, colors, and creeds. When he became Mayor the whole city became his paternal responsibility, to be nurtured, taught, developed, educated—and to be whacked when circumstances required. A patriarchal mayor, he hated with terrifying vigor anyone or anything, inside or outside the city, which in his opinion would injure New York or New Yorkers.

He was a bookish as well as a practical student of government, and he believed the final test of the democratic process was offered by the municipalities. When he became mayor, city government was at its nadir; when he left City Hall, not only was New York's pride restored but official capability had been rebuilt in many American cities. The countless physical and administrative transformations the city owes to him were nothing compared to this accomplishment—the result of his will and character.

But LaGuardia liked most being a Congressman. While mayor he often said he was happier in Washington and and wished to return there. He was popular among Congressmen, too, and among departmental bureaucrats, which is rare indeed. The Norris-La Guardia Act was

JOSEPH LILLY covered LaGuardia's first mayoralty campaign for the World-Telegram. *In 1934 he was appointed assistant to the city comptroller and later president of the Tax Department.*

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his greatest legislative feat, but he was eternally involved in contests. His reelection was always difficult.

The summit of his career was a defeat. He met it a year ago, at Lake Success, when he failed to persuade the United Nations to replace UNRRA with a simpler, more compact organization that would be financed and operated internationally to reconstruct and feed Europe. Believing profoundly that the situation called for healing, not bickering, he protested bitterly against the use of food as a political instrument. He knew at first hand all the factors in the festering international equation.

An American, but a humanity-loving American, he was convinced that the decision to act nationally instead of internationally would deepen, perhaps irretrievably, the division between East and West. He warned explicitly against what is happening now and asserted boldly that if the nations could not agree on a method of saving the starving victims of the war, they could hardly be expected to agree on less simple matters. His speeches on the subject brought the most frigid diplomats to their feet in applause. Most of these, following instructions, voted in support of his idea, but the United States killed it.

LaGuardia's love for the United States was mature and at the same time school-boyish. I believe he would have undertaken almost any mission that any President of the United States assigned to him. Yet he had the moral courage to stand before the roster of the United Nations, defy his President, and accuse his government of doing exactly what everyone today can see it has done.

He had known in advance what position the United States delegation intended to take, and he fought as he had never fought before, by personal plea and by confidential letter, in public meeting, over the radio, by excitation of pressure groups, by button-holing delegates—in the hope that he could arouse public opinion and compel a change of heart in the State Department. There was a good response, but after two army C-47's were shot down by Tito's airmen, neither the American people nor the government could be wholly reasonable. These addresses of LaGuardia's are classics.

The election last year depressed him greatly, but he saw it also as the reaction that constantly recurs, an expression of post-war and post-Rooseveltian political exhaustion. He thought it would take many years for the liberal side to recover. He seriously considered the notion of an entirely new party, but thought it could not have much strength for a long time. However, his sense of political reality was very acute. He knew the danger of further dividing our people in an international crisis and how great were the technical difficulties of forming an effective third party.

Last year in Europe he was his buoyant, defiant self in every country where he found things amiss. He risked being denied the privilege of seeing the collective farms of the Ukraine and the orphans' homes of Byelorussia, about which he had been most curious, by going into a Kilkenny fight with the Communist high command in Vienna. He had said the Russians should get out of Austria, allowing the other Allies to do likewise, and give the Austrians a chance. The Russians resented this advice, but LaGuardia felt it his duty to give it because feeding the Austrians was his problem. The Constituent Assembly in Rome listened with close attentiveness to his long lecture on the way to form a democratic regime. He met banqueting Russians toast-for-toast in Kiev and managed to praise what he considered good in them in one end of a sentence that at its other end carried a bare-knuckled reply to a remark he thought unfriendly to Uncle Sam. He came home very tired, then plunged into his great fight.

Caricature by Seligson

LaGuardia in Action

Hard-boiled, hard-bitten, rasp-tongued, he gloried in being considered a very tough guy, a ruthless fighter; yet he was the most sentimental, kindly, and gentle of men. When the pressure was on he thought little of keeping waiting important men whom he had dragooned to come to his office, but he would drop everything to talk to a little girl about things that interested her. Whenever he went on trips he never failed to telephone his wife and their children. He hated to waste money on a needed new suit for himself, but he insisted upon his official right to pick up the check when he was out with people.

In his last active year, when he was in Washington pouring out his remaining energy in a herculean and hopeless effort to feed, clothe, and give material hope to several hundred million human beings who were victims of the war, he occasionally would complain of feeling old, which was quite unlike him. He rarely left his hotel suite at night—his family being in New York—and after the last messages and phone calls he would sometimes drowse off to sleep from sheer fatigue while he listened to a radio concert.

But in the morning he was the same old tiger, eyes narrow and blazing, demanding the impossible, insisting that it be done immediately, damning the enemies of his purpose, impatient that every assigned task was not accomplished at once. He knew no friend when the public interest was to be served.

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EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Gambling in Food

IT WOULD be unfair to assign the sole blame for the recent spurt in food prices to the commodity speculators, but the effect of their operations has been to supercharge an inflationary motor already running at racing speed.

The fundamental trouble, of course, is an unbalanced supply-demand situation for which basic responsibility must be divided between the war and the weather. Frost, flood, and drought beating on European fields long starved of fertilizer have had a devastating effect on crops. According to the latest reports, prospective wheat production on the Continent, excluding Russia, is below one billion bushels—20 per cent less than the yield of the poor 1946 harvest. And in many countries the important supplementary crops, such as potatoes, are proving disappointing.

The United States has reaped a record wheat crop, but spring floods and summer droughts have severely curtailed corn production, and further damage is threatened by early frosts. That means a shortage of feed at a time when home demand for meat, butter, eggs, and other animal products is far above pre-war levels. High prices for such commodities encourage farmers to hold their grain off the market and to divert wheat from human to animal consumption. Consequently, the price of wheat, despite the large crop and a 20 per cent reduction in allotments for export, has moved upward as rapidly as that of scarce corn. It appears that the total food supply in sight just isn't enough to satisfy American appetites at present income levels and to provide for Europe's minimum requirements. The answer may be that Americans should "eat less" as Senator Taft has put it, but with all controls abandoned, the only way that end seems likely to be achieved is rationing by price. That has two consequences: (1) the burden of reduced consumption is placed on the low-income groups, whose diet is already below full health standards; (2) foreign nations, competing for grain against American purchasers of steak, find their scarce dollars exchanging for smaller and smaller quantities of food.

This tragic situation has not been made by speculators, but it is made for them, and in taking advantage of it they render it worse. The classic defense of speculation in commodity futures is that it tends to moderate the swings of the market. Under normal conditions that is possibly true, but in times of either marked glut or severe famine the activities of the commodity gamblers lead to a gross exaggeration of price movements. When the bears beat down prices, producers are apt to become panic-stricken and to throw their commodities on the market for fear they will become worthless; when, as today, the bulls are in the ascendancy and bidding quotations up and up, farmers are tempted to hold back their produce, causing a further shrinkage in visible supplies to serve as an excuse for still higher prices. So, while in the long run speculation may not greatly affect average prices, in the short run it causes distortions in the supply-demand picture and places heavy strains on the whole economy.

It is now twenty-five years since the passage of the Commodity Exchange Act, which provided for federal regulation of commodity markets. In that period certain former abuses have been ended, or at least checked. The more flagrant varieties of price manipulation have been outlawed, and limitation of commitments and other restrictions on large traders have made the "cornering" of markets nearly impossible. But as J. M. Mehl, head of the Commodity Exchange Administration, remarked recently, federal regulation "does not extend to such important matters as margins and price fluctuation limits, even though these may constitute an effective means of curbing excessive speculative activity and unwarranted price movements."

In the stock markets margins are fixed by the Federal Reserve authorities and since early in 1946 have stood at 75 per cent of the purchase price—a rate which has certainly served to discourage gambling. The commodity markets, however, determine their own margins, and they have been kept relatively low. On September 11, following criticisms by Republican Senators and others, the Chicago Board of Trade raised requirements on corn and wheat but only from 35 to 45 cents a bushel. Thus by putting up $4,500 a speculator can still buy for future delivery 10,000 bushels of wheat valued, as of September 24, at over $26,000. No wonder that gamblers who have been frozen out of stock trading by the present stiff margin rules have flocked to the commodity markets.

Seeking mitigation of "the ravages of the speculative fever and the chills and shakes that follow," Mr. Mehl has requested—he cannot order—the Chicago Board of Trade to raise margins on grain deals to at least one-third of the selling price. His plea has been echoed by Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson, and Senator Flanders, chairman of a Congressional subcommittee investigating prices, has demanded 100 per cent margins. More recently members of this same group wired the President urging the Administration to use every means in its power to restrain commodity speculation, which "is accentuating market fluctuations instead of decreasing them." They added: "It is incredible that so large operations in the necessities of life should be permitted on such small cash margins."

It is indeed, but the directors of the Chicago Board of Trade have so far shown no sign of taking action. They know that without further legislation the Administration is powerless, and they are fully aware that Congress is not anxious to interrupt its vacation for this or any other reason. For instance, on September 13 Senator Irving M. Ives declared (1) that unless "the wild speculation in grain and other food stops, the Administration or Congress or both will have to take some action; (2) that he saw no reason for a special session. As long as our legislators take so lackadaisical a view of their duties, we are unlikely to see any voluntary action to curb gambling in food taken by the commodity exchanges, whose members profit handsomely from boiling markets."

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Del Vayo—Marshall Plan vs. Socialism

THE sixteen-nation conference on the Marshall plan finished its work with unexpected speed. Hunger does not permit delay. The conferees have slashed by almost a third their original request for $29 billion of American aid; even so, this country will have to send Europe between four and five billion dollars a year for the next four years. To sell this to Congress, the Truman Administration is already hinting in public and warning in private that the money must be spent if Europe is to be saved from communism.

From the beginning the plan had this appeal. When Molotov walked out on the Paris conference, he handed the anti-Soviet crowd their strongest talking point. For certain American liberals the plan offered an ideal way to help a starving Europe and at the same time force Russia into a general political retreat. In their enthusiasm for a stop-Russia policy they overlooked the danger that the Marshall plan might block European socialism more effectively than it would communism. In its final consequences this is an anti-Socialist plan, a part of a deliberate move to force Europe into the free-enterprise mold. In this effort capitalist aggression and American idealism make a perfect team.

I say this without irony. I am the first to admit that this country's intervention in Europe is not inspired solely by a desire for new markets or as a preventive of overproduction. It is an American article of faith that Europeans can best be saved by strong doses of the same brand of free enterprise that led the United States to prosperity. Writing recently in *Le Monde,* Bertrand de la Salle, a moderate French liberal just back from the United States, declared: "The psychological climate of America is favorable to an effort to restore capitalism as the world economic regime." It is not financial imperialism alone; evangelism also plays a part. For the moment a harmless heretic like Ramadier may be used—at least until a French De Gasperi can be found—but in a later stage only the representatives of pre-war industrial Europe will be trusted with the complex tasks of reconstruction.

On the Continent skepticism and suspicion of the Marshall plan have steadily increased in the past two months. Frederick Kuh, who followed the Paris conference with minute care, reported on September 14 in *PM*: "The United States method of preparing the Marshall plan is intensifying anti-American feeling in Europe." Criticism, he said, is not limited to Communist circles "but is emanating from all sectors of the European community." Intelligent Europeans are worried equally by the economic aspects of the plan and its political implications.

At first Secretary Marshall's proposal was warmly received. American help was desperately needed, and no party was prepared to risk losing votes by attacking it—least of all the Communists. On July 6, four days *after* Russia's refusal to take part in the Paris conference, Palmiro Togliatti declared that the Italian Communists were in favor of the plan provided it did not encourage the division of Europe into two blocs or subordinate Italy's economy to foreign capitalist interests. In France Maurice Thorez took much the same position, with the specific reservation that the Marshall plan must not be used to revive German industry at the expense of French security. Had the Communists believed that the American proposal would not be turned against Russia, they might have proved far less insistent than the Socialists that nationalization must be carried through. *Dirigisme* in France is a Socialist platform. The unshakable Ramadier might remain Prime Minister forever were it not for the directive of the Lyon congress that he either reinstate full controls or resign. Judging by the results of the by-elections in Liverpool and West Islington the British remain loyal to socialism despite intimations from Americans inside and outside the Administration that Washington would be more sympathetic if Britain would give up its nationalization program.

Europe's mood was clearly reflected in the excellent speech of Jan Masaryk to the U. N. General Assembly. The Continent has already gone to the left, he said, and will resist any attempt from the outside to switch it back.

But it looks more and more as if Congress would oppose the Marshall plan unless it carries with it a guaranty of European good behavior. What this means is indicated by the reactions of various Senators and Congressmen to the report of the Paris conference. Said Senator Ferguson: "We must curb the spread of socialism as well as communism, and stimulation of private enterprise is the only way to do it." The well-informed Mr. Krock told New York *Times* readers the other day: "It appears to be certain that the following ideas will be strongly urged in Congress, some with considerable support in the executive arm: (1) Nations whose basic economic recovery is to be assisted by the United States must, during that period, suspend political experimentation with systems proclaimed to be hostile to our own. . . ." Here, then, is the condition number one for American aid. Influential government officials, notably Secretary of the Treasury Snyder, are convinced that now is the time to put an end to Socialist "nonsense" in Europe.

But socialist planning is not an ideological caprice. It offers the only possible way to rebuild Europe and at the same time give political democracy a chance. In its present unstable condition, damage done in one place is felt all over the Continent. American rejection of Britain's nationalization policy in the Ruhr, for example, has weakened Socialist strength in France as well as in Germany. Should British Labor give up its program, all other European Socialist parties would suffer.

If American liberals in their all-out support of the Marshall plan help to defeat socialism in Europe, their own natural allies will be wiped out in the inevitable clash between the extreme right and the Communists. The recent statement of the Americans for Democratic Action unfortunately ignored this inescapable fact.

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In the Wind

HOW did you find it down in Delray Beach?" asked the Candle.

"Palmy," replied the Wind. "By the way, do you happen to know who owns the world?"

"I know who's *going* to own the world, if that's what you mean," the Candle said. "The insurance companies are going to own the world. Of this, I have long been convinced. A few statistics released last month by the United Press only go to bear me out. What do you think is the richest corporation in America—for all I know, in the world?"

"If you mean," said the Wind, "the corporation with the greatest total assets, then it's the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Eight billion, forty-five million dollars and a few odd—very odd—housing projects. Since I also read the United Press, I know which corporations are third, seventh, eighth, sixteenth, and seventeenth on that list. They are the Prudential Insurance Company of America, the Equitable Life Assurance Society, the New York Life Insurance Company, the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, and the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company. If you were president of the last-named corporation, you could put your John Hancock to a check for $2,037,505,696, and still be $33,988,289 richer than Ben Fairless and *his* crowd."

"Oh," said the Candle. "Well, let's talk about the poor people. What is it that they say on the back of the paper match-books that they give out these days at Hamburg Heaven at Madison and Sixty-second?"

"That," said the Wind, "is a snap. They say, 'Catering to those who are aware.' Now I'll ask you one. What is the most redundantly christened Pullman car on all the New York Central's tracks?"

"Soft touch," the Candle said. "The car is named 'Imperial Empire.' Robert R. Young has it picked out for his personal expropriation, immediately after the Anschluss."

"You are doing very well," said the Wind. "Have you been West lately? How are things out there?"

"Things are blooming," replied the Candle. "May I quote from the San Francisco *Chronicle?* And the *Examiner?* California students, it reports, will be taught mathematics without social significance. The State Board of Education has accepted two math textbooks only after extensive revision. Seventh- and eighth-grade students will now get a 'true, propaganda-free' picture of present living conditions. The deleted passages often gave 'pathetic pictures of life in the United States.' For instance: the passage 'one-third of our people are poorly housed' has been deleted. So has reference to 'the horse-and-buggy days.' That, as we all know, was 'used as a term of reproach by President Roosevelt against the Republicans.' References to 'slums and slum clearance' have been eliminated. Our average annual income has been changed from $1,200 to $2,400. The price of a $975 new car has been readjusted to fit present trends. Shall I go on?"

"No," answered the Wind. "I see what you mean. Above all, let us avoid the pathetic picture."

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Peace Without Victory

END OF A BERLIN DIARY, by William L. Shirer. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

IT WAS the compact intensity with which Mr. Shirer drew his pictures of day-to-day events in Hitler's capital that made "Berlin Diary" so impressive a book. "End of a Berlin Diary" does not and could not have the same vertebrate strength, for during Mr. Shirer's second term in Berlin, from October to December, 1945, the smoke of war was still drifting over the broken country and events had not settled into a dynamic pattern. Even so, "End of a Berlin Diary" is a powerful book, and a tragic one. There is no victory in it. Reason has not triumphed and the men who control and are controlled are merely blundering from day to day. The postscript, written a year later, is not more optimistic.

As Mr. Shirer reports the post-war German scene there is little vision in the conquerors and no salvation in the unrepentant Germans. At times the author himself appears to be caught in the general confusion. He is afraid of the future Germany, as well he might be, since he knows and reports the failure of the Anglo-American denazification "effort." Yet he knows that without a restored Germany Europe must remain crippled. Despite this he is critical of the British Labor Party for wanting to build up the Ruhr once more. In another place he declares that the reconstructed Ruhr must be placed under international control and at least some of its products distributed to Allied countries. The idea of control, of course, is not absent from the hazy and falteringly carried out plans of the British. And one hesitates to approve of the "tribute" idea, if that is what Mr. Shirer means.

But these criticisms tell little against the merits of a book that so vividly reports the facts upon which political schemes must rest. The real problem of Germany is not that its industry has been destroyed. Mr. Shirer declares that it has not been destroyed. At the height of the Allied bombing in 1944 German factories maintained a higher level of production than ever before in the history of that country. Indeed, American officials told him that German industry was virtually intact, and in his opinion an unhindered Germany could build a powerful military machine in five years. We may believe that the destruction of the ordinary tools of living is the main hindrance to the raising of production under the Allies. And we may believe, with the author, that the working class is the only one to offer hope. In that case, the moral dereliction and the political infantilism of the German people, their failure to recognize their responsibility for the tragedy, must be a check to hope. That is the state of mind which Mr. Shirer vividly describes.

Upon all this I would venture only one qualifying remark. It is vain, I think, to expect any country ever to recognize its guilt in explicit fashion. Even an individual whose behavior suggests that he is tormented by guilt rarely does that. In general it is unwise to frame post-war policies in the light of the political and emotional standards of the war itself, even when there has been no possible doubt of their rightness. Certainly, in the case of Germany there can be no way forward that does not entail huge risks. The risks, however, really derive from the state of the exterior world rather than from conditions within Germany. There can be no *new* Germany until the present conflict of nations is solved. As Mr. Shirer says, the danger is that the Nazis will profit by the political battle between the United States and the Soviet Union. That is the growing cloud which he sees in the place where the horizon should be.

During his second stay in Germany Mr. Shirer had access to the vast bulk of documents seized by the Western Allies. The study of them has compelled him to change his opinions on certain points. At one time he thought

THE LATE SUMMER

Everything still, oh, absolutely still.
Who would have thought Pomona was like this,
So almost like Medusa? But she is.
No breath whatever stirs
This warm domain of hers.
Under the drooping willows, whose festoons
Hang down like chains of green and heavy stones
Two lovers stand, holding each other close.
They neither move nor whisper; and their pose,
The taller one unbending for the kiss,
Is like the deaf, the rigid, like all those
Most hopeless listeners,
Locked, shut, held fast in nothing.

By the cove
The great log, with the broken antler, lies
Heavy and huge and gray,
An old, old ram, or mountain sheep, who came
To drink, and failed, the water being steel.

Oh goddess, goddess, need it be this way?
Break, lift, the trance, the spell. Let the wind rise,
Let branches, in the bright September, move,
And garments flutter, as the singing girls
Take home the harvest, in the cool of love.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

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that Hitler was bluffing at Munich. Now he is sure that he was not. Hitler would have gone to war in 1938, and in Mr. Shirer's belief it would have been wiser to have accepted battle then. One agrees. But even taking into account his evidence that a number of generals were plotting to overthrow Hitler, one cannot agree that the war would have been a short one. At that time the animating force of Hitler's "idea" was already as evident as the fact that the Europe of Daladier, Chamberlain, and Stalin was hopelessly divided. These three leaders were enfeebled by ambiguities in their doctrines or by other political and social factors. Hitler, a sick man who had warded off the graver symptoms of his disease by creating an absolving myth, had far greater possibilities of dynamic action than the West. His myth had already taken hold of a majority of his people and by turning their aggressiveness against others had given them a spurious and perverse health. That was the observed fact, dramatically reported in "Berlin Diary" and set down again in the Nürnberg section of this book. The most important facts concerning the war are not material but psychological facts.

It is as a psychological report that "End of a Berlin Diary" must be read. Its high point, surely, is the account of Hitler's end contained in the interrogation of the German air woman, Hannah Reitsch, here given in full. Physically cowering beneath the ruins of Berlin, his body trembling and consumed with fever, Hitler still raves out his malignant dreams. The myth has broken, and the sickness, no longer held in check, is like a possessing demon. He must die there, for the honor of Germany, yet others must escape to pour out his hysterical hatred upon the men who had betrayed *him*. He broods over maps, disposing his non-existent armies according to his overwhelming intuitions. He is obsessed with the notion of suicide, he will die to prove himself the sacrificed God of Germany. All of his huddled followers must kill themselves, so that his idea may live. Even in his will he seems to think that the victors will carry out his wishes and erect an art gallery in his heroic memory. Most terrible of all, perhaps, is that tiny detail of Hitler's marriage. The forms were observed. "The persons of 1 and 2 declare that they are of complete Aryan descent and have no hereditary disease to exclude the marriage. Signed by the competent official—Wagner." Amid catastrophe he will make that marriage which he had thought would destroy his power over German women, but still he must make it according to the squalid law of his vanished Reich. What happened after Götterdämmerung, when the flames had consumed Valhalla? The other Wagner did not say. There came about something like the vast, evil-haunted dereliction that Mr. Shirer describes in this powerful book.

RALPH BATES

Is America Unique?

THE SHAPING OF THE AMERICAN TRADITION. Text by Louis M. Hacker. Documents Edited by Louis M. Hacker and Helene E. Zahler. Two Volumes. Columbia University Press. $7.50.

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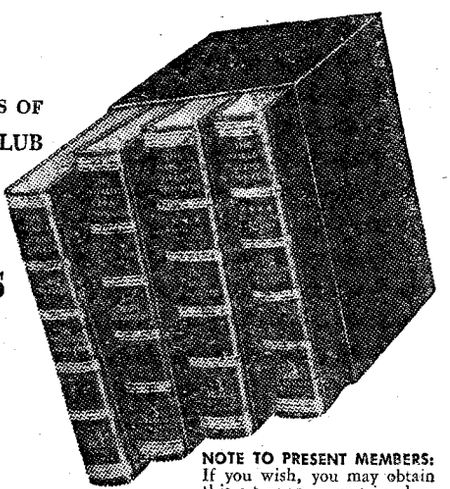

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extremely good. They begin with some pages from William Harrison's description of England in the reign of Elizabeth and end with an excerpt from Wendell Willkie's "One World." In between are selections from public papers, speeches, articles, books, and private letters, providing a catholic assortment of points of view.

Personally, I have but two complaints to offer. In contrasting European feudalism with American freedom—a main theme of the work—Dr. Hacker seems to me to have stacked the cards a little by playing down some of the darker aspects of the New World. In particular, his documentation tends to concentrate on developments in the North and West and to overemphasize the role of New England idealism. The South is comparatively neglected. Again, since Dr. Hacker stresses the vital part played in the rise of American civilization by private enterprise, he should surely have illustrated more fully the ideas and motivations of the entrepreneurs. I find here no cullings from the rich business literature of the golden twenties—a period in which our industrial leaders were very articulate about their hopes and beliefs. No doubt many of their pronouncements now seem uncommonly silly, but some study of them is essential for an understanding of the period.

Turning from the documents to the text, I find much debatable matter presented in an admirable manner. Dr. Hacker is an exceptionally clear and incisive writer and has a sharp eye for significant detail. But the point of view that inspires this work is likely to surprise and shock some readers who remember him as one of the most trenchant critics of capitalist society.

It is, indeed, difficult to believe that the Professor Hacker responsible for these volumes is the same Louis Hacker who in *The Nation* of July 26, 1933, so fervently attacked the famous "frontier" theory of the late Frederick Jackson Turner. Reviewing a posthumous collection of Turner's papers, he wrote:

> The historical growth of the United States, in short, was not unique; merely in certain particulars and for a brief time it was different from the European pattern largely because of the processes of settlement. With settlement achieved—that is to say, the historic function of extensive agriculture performed, class (not sectional!) lines solidified, competitive capitalism converted into monopolistic capitalism under the guidance of the money power, and imperialism the ultimate destiny of the nation—the United States once again was returning to the main stream of European institutional development.

In the General Introduction to this new work Dr. Hacker totally repudiates the ideas expressed in the preceding passage and adopts Turner's view of the uniqueness of American civilization. True, he finds that the frontier "safety-valve" provides only a partial explanation of this fact. Of equal importance, he thinks, are the four "cornerstones" of the American tradition—freedom of religion, freedom of enterprise, the weak state, and equality of opportunity.

There is a startling contrast between this analysis and the Marxist interpretation of American history which Dr. Hacker gave us in his earlier works. Once he believed that the class struggle was developing in this country more slowly but no less surely than in Europe. Now he minimizes the importance of class conflicts, describes the American outlook as essentially middle-class, and suggests that the equality of opportunity which encouraged that outlook is still a potent factor in our society. Undoubtedly the facts support him up to a point, but like others who have seized on this idea he fails to qualify it sufficiently. It is true that class lines have been exceptionally fluid in this country and that a large section of the workers have always had a middle-class point of view. But it is also true that American middle-class predominance has received physical and moral support from the existence of depressed groups who could be depended upon to do the dirty work. There were always immigrants crowding into the Northern cities and mining districts, and in the South there were the Negroes.

Dr. Hacker's generalizations about "the weak state" also strike me as over-simplification. I certainly would not dispute his contention that the American Revolution was as much a revolt against the hindrances to free enterprise imposed by the centralized British state as it was a struggle for political freedom. But the objection of

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many of the Founding Fathers was not to a strong state as such but to a strong state not under their control. As soon as the revolution was won, they did their best to establish a strong state built on property rights. True, Hamilton was defeated and the Federalists kept in check for a long time, but after the civil war the rising industrialists and financiers captured the federal government and made it powerful to the extent that suited their interests. If the state was weak in repelling raids by the propertied class on the public purse, it was certainly strong in protecting that class from the demands of the workers.

This relation between economic and political power which was emphasized by the radical Louis Hacker of the thirties is played down by Professor Hacker today. The man who once, perhaps too crudely, believed that all capitalist societies followed the same laws of growth and decay now sees American capitalism as a peculiar and benevolent institution.

However, even so drastic a shift in viewpoint is not, in itself, cause for criticism. Freedom to change one's mind is, or ought to be, a fundamental human right. Nobody can blame Dr. Hacker for discarding his Marxian spectacles: they often seemed badly out of focus to me. But we are entitled to ask why he has seen fit to replace them with the rose-tinted glasses of Candide.

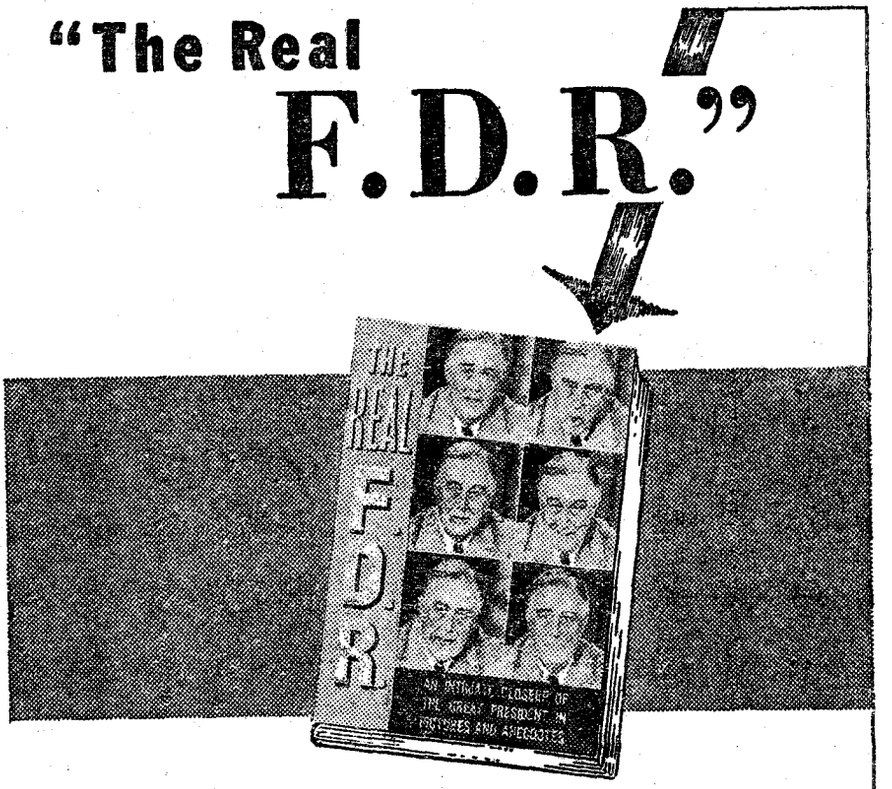
KEITH HUTCHISON

The Mexican Folk

A TREASURY OF MEXICAN FOLKWAYS. By Frances Toor. Crown Publishers. $5.

MEXICAN folklore is one of those large, rich, tangled areas into which many have ventured and which few have successfully penetrated. It has become a happy hunting ground for would-be writers in search of a subject, for in this largely uncharted field practically anything goes, and one man's guess is as good as another's. No comprehensive study has been made of the subject since the days of the Spanish Conquest, when certain priests and missionaries recorded, with perception and acumen, the folkways of the conquered. A few centuries later came Prescott,

"The Real F.D.R."



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whose magnificent book was mainly historical. And now there is the recently published "A Treasury of Mexican Folkways" by Frances Toor.

The "Treasury" is, indeed, the first and only reference book covering all aspects of current Mexican folkways. This is its chief virture and claim to distinction. It is also the first major enterprise undertaken by Miss Toor since she ceased publication, a decade ago, of *Mexican Folkways*. This truly excellent magazine, founded and edited by Miss Toor, enlisted as contributors, experts in the field. In the "Treasury" Miss Toor has again done a good job of compilation. For the book consists, mainly, of material condensed from the findings of other investigators. Only a fraction of the data was gathered directly by the author herself. This limited first-hand knowledge of the field may partly account for the lack of definition and sharpness which generally derive from immediate contact with the subject or thing described. And a naturally dull literary style does not help overcome this initial difficulty.

It is true that in writing the "Treasury" Miss Toor undertook a vast assignment and one that certainly no one else in Mexico had the patience and tenacity to see through. For this all credit is due her. The book has over 500 pages of text and is illustrated with 170 excellent photographs and with 100 line drawings and 10 attractive color plates by Carlos Merida. The approach is non-technical and popular. Although there are a number of errors and misconceptions in the "Treasury" it will undoubtedly remain the standard reference work on Mexican folklore for many years to come, since there is no other. Moreover, some excellent material is contained in two of its sections, Legends, and Songs and Dance Music; here the flavor comes through straight, without benefit of comment or interpretation. Several representative tales are told simply and well. About seventy-five pages of songs and of dance music, with words and musical notation, are made available for the first time in a single volume. The selection covers a wide range, including primitive, religious, revolutionary, and dance songs, Christmas music, ballads, and serenades.

The major part of the book deals with family, community, and work relationships and institutions; with agriculture and religious practices; with birth, death, and marriage rites and beliefs; with regional arts and crafts, customs, ceremonies, attitudes, fiestas, and dances. But while there are many data, there is little insight into the complex culture patterns of the Mexican folk. And there is no attempt to classify and correlate the unwieldy mass of material. Instead, there are sporadic generalizations, fortunately infrequent, for they are rarely felicitous, as—"The people seldom sang after the Conquest because only those who are free and happy sing." And, in describing mariachi bands, "One occasionally finds a rustic Bach among them." With the confidence of a radio commentator, Miss Toor describes music never heard by living man—that is, the music of the Aztecs—as "vigorously rhythmic . . . the expression of a virile warrior race." And she asserts that European instruments played by the natives "have a primitive sound." Yet these instruments sound the same in Mexico as elsewhere—like brass, violins, and guitars. The word "primitive" can indeed be applied to them in some cases, but only to signify their crude manufacture.

It is surprising also to discover that all the ritual dances are still performed "with faith, ability, and grace, as before the Conquest." During twenty-five years in Mexico Miss Toor has miraculously managed never to see a listless, graceless, dull performances of even one of the ritual dances! Others have been less fortunate. The author cites three outstanding dances as pre-Hispanic or as having aboriginal characteristics, among them the *Concheros*. Yet this dance of the Soldiers of Christ is not pre-Hispanic, and its aboriginal characteristics, if any, are highly dubious, as the theme and treatment clearly show. Christ is commonly supposed to have been introduced into the New World by the Spaniards. But possibly Miss Toor has private sources of information. Only such very private sources could account for the remark that when the Soldiers of Christ, as the *Concheros* dancers are called, perform for the Virgin of Guadalupe, they remember the Aztec goddess, Tonantzin.

The book has other shortcomings. Frequently the amount of space allocated to various subjects appears to depend more on easy accessibility of source material than on intrinsic value. Thus only a page is devoted to the ritual dances of Yucatan, and those of Chiapas are covered in less than a page. There is the incorrect implication that the *Acatlaxquis* is restricted to one village only, whereas it is actually performed in a number of localities. According to Miss Toor's brief description of the *Quetzales*, it consists of a few simple figures to different melodies. Nothing could be

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farther from the truth. Actually the *Quetzales,* one of the most interesting and possibly one of the oldest of the indigenous dances, has a rather complicated choreography. Its distinctive quality of movement is characterized by smooth, sweeping gestures, and by low bent knee movements and turns reminiscent of Javanese dancing.

These are only a few of the errors of fact and judgment in the "Treasury." The basic fallacy is the assumption that, with rare exceptions, everything in Mexico is beautiful. The adjective itself recurs with sledge-hammer insistence on page after page of the book, sometimes in paragraph after paragraph. But beyond the hackneyed writing, there is the fact that not only the good, the true, and the beautiful exist in Mexico, but also evil, falsehood, and ugliness. Yet they have been almost completely expurgated from the "Treasury," which paints Mexico in beautiful, beautiful, beautiful tourist colors.

This determination to avoid unpleasant facts is nowhere more strikingly expressed than in the naive, uncritical descriptions of local miracles. The discussion of both Catholic and pagan practices and beliefs reveals an almost wilful ignorance of the origins of both and, occasionally, even of the means by which Catholic faith and institutions were imposed on the Mexican folk. Thus no reference whatsoever is made to the documentary evidence disclosed in recent years of Indians who died of hunger and exhaustion while building the convent of Chalma. Instead, Miss Toor is content merely to repeat the pretty story about a humble shoemaker from Jalapa who became Padre Fray Bartolomé de Jesús María and who built the convent, cloisters, and cells of that famous convent.

And yet this rather superficial study of the life, ways, and culture patterns of the Mexican folk has been almost universally hailed as the outstanding work of an expert by other experts in newspapers and magazines throughout the country. Whether these reviewers have praised the "Treasury" through ignorance or simply in the spirit of auld lang syne does not matter. In so doing they have performed no service to the intelligent reading public or to Mexican folklore.

VIRGINIA MISHNUN

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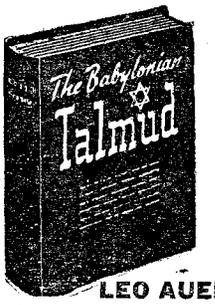

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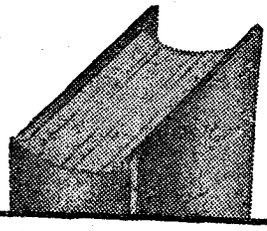

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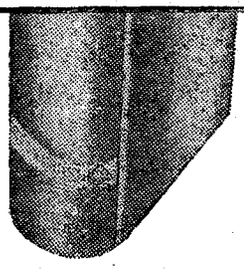

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Transatlantic Kitsch

PROUD DESTINY. By Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking Press. $3.50.

AS A novel this account of Benjamin Franklin's visit to Louis XVI's court is tedious, cheap, and insufferably long. The only reason for any further comment is its considerable significance as a cultural symptom.

In recent years a number of Continental writers—Remarque, Asch, Feuchtwanger—have discovered the delights of American commerce. By artfully merging American best-seller slickness and vulgarity with the mindless torpor of the conventional European *roman* they have contrived a profitable formula which book-club members take for serious writing. Actually these writers turn out transatlantic kitsch, a product of the union of European middle-brow weariness and American low-brow commercialism.

The basic approach of this kind of novel, of which "Proud Destiny" is a perfect example, may be described as historical voyeurism. Subsuming history under his ego, the novelist revels in his unchecked manipulation of great events ("it was no accident that on the morning of June 6 . . .") and the gossipy intrigues which edge them. The reader's basic function is to submit to the novelist, who tells him where he may peek into the past. Hence the reader does not experience freely and on equal terms with the author the emotions and meanings suggested by the novel; they are fed to him strained, diluted, and formularized. Whereas genuine literature promotes a relationship of maturity and fellowship between reader and writer, this kind of historical novel results in a relationship as between tourist and guide: the former submits himself to the latter's direction in exchange for a glimpse of history's sights.

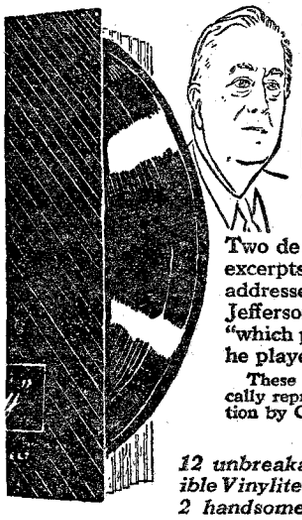
Ah, but such sights! We thrill to Marie Antoinette's bed-chamber ceremonies, at which thirty-six ladies dress her; we stare with members of the royal court as Marie suffers her accouchement; we envy Franklin's vantage point as he rests on the edge of a bathtub in which a French beauty soaps her limbs; and we snicker with his courtiers at Louis's fear of an operation which would permit him a normal sex life. (Here we also feel a bit superior: no red-blooded American would wait seven years to consummate a marriage with Marie Antoinette!) Feuchtwanger refrains from explicitly describing sexual activity, for he knows how much more suggestive are the sado-masochistic trimmings of sex within a royal court's authoritarian structure. Consequently "Proud Destiny" is a sustained literary tease.

Politically, Feuchtwanger also knows which way the winds blow. He throws a dry bone to *PM* readers by putting into Franklin's mouth a few phrases about "progressives" which suggest the happy thought that old Ben was the eighteenth-century Henry Wallace. But "progressivism" is subordinated to the novel's main theme—persistent flattery of all things American. At seventy-two Franklin is shown to be more virile than the French courtiers and the intellectual superior of the great minds of Europe. Feuchtwanger knows that though the American reader enjoys a glimpse of the fleshpots of Europe, he still requires reassurance of his superiority over the decadent Europeans. The extent to which Feuchtwanger is ready to offer this reassurance seems somehow remarkably related to the present domination of the European continent by the American dollar.

"Proud Destiny" suffers from literary elephantiasis, a disease, endemic to American publishing, which is dangerous to readers and fatal to reviewers. Like other best-sellers, the novel is outrageously padded; its author spins pages of trivia in that style of judicious imprecision which some people find so impressive. How one longs for a blue pencil!

Finally a word about the reviews this book has received. It would be absurd to become indignant with the publisher or author, for they are business men, but one cannot refrain from expressing astonishment and anger at the extravagant praise the newspaper reviewers have lavished on "Proud Destiny." After all, what is the point of reviewing books if one does not fulfil one's first obligation, which in this instance is simply to tell one's readers that the book is a piece of trash?

IRVING HOWE



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Letters to the Editors

SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, AND THE WEST

[*We devote most of our letter columns this week to a representative selection of the many comments we have received on Margaret Marshall's article in the issue of September 13: British Socialism, Soviet Communism, and the West.*]

Should Clear the Air

Dear Sirs: I was deeply impressed by Miss Marshall's article in the September 13 issue of *The Nation* entitled Socialism, Communism, and the West. I have long held her views on the meaning of the British experiment to American liberals, and on their curious blindness to its implications.

I warmly subscribe to the thesis that liberals and radicals should unite quickly "on a program of fighting for democratic socialism in Europe, beginning with democratic socialism in Britain." But various shibboleths are in the way, including the American liberal fixation about India and colonialism. Miss Marshall's article is capable of helping to clear the air for American liberals on this whole issue. BARRY BINGHAM

Louisville, Ky., September 16

Clarifying

Dear Sirs: Please tell Margaret Marshall how much her article has done to clarify my own thinking and feeling and thereby to give me courage to face the black reaction ahead of us all.

HORACE B. ENGLISH

Columbus, Ohio, September 17

Satisfying Reading

Dear Sirs: Not in a long time has an article, in any publication, been as satisfying reading as Margaret Marshall's British Socialism, Soviet Communism, and the West, in *The Nation* of September 13. The historical perspective in the comparison between violent revolution, as in Russia, and "revolution by consent," as in Britain, is, I think, as excellent as the balance and maturity of such judgment are rare.

The wish to see the British type of social and economic change succeed is, I am sure, shared by very many people here and abroad, and it is to be hoped that the Administration and particularly Congress will show enough understanding of the issues involved to act effectively to save Britain and Western civilization.

As for Britain itself and its problems, I wish a way could be found to convince its working men and women, and especially the coal miners, that the cause of the Labor government is their cause and that failure of that government would be their failure, probably for a long time to come. GEORGE MAURER

Penn's Grove, N. J., September 16

Too Much Civil Liberty

Dear Sirs: I would like to comment on Margaret Marshall's article, Socialism, Communism, and the West. To expect liberals and radicals to be inspired by the vacillating, insipid performance of the British Labor Party is asking too much. The leaders and policy are so similar to the Social Democrats of Germany after the First World War that I view the English "socialism" of Attlee and Bevin with apprehension. Their inaction can form a bridgehead for fascism, unwittingly, no doubt, but just as disastrously as if planned.

Margaret Marshall's smug assumption of the superiority of the West fills me with dismay. The patronizing tone used when referring to Eastern Europe could very well come from a Ham Fish or a Rankin; it is particularly shocking to find it in *The Nation*. I feel the Slavic East has much to offer mankind. Russia, although far from a Utopia, is still the only Socialist state in existence. If Western Europe can bring about true socialism without dictatorship or bloodshed and with unimpaired civil liberties, then it will be time for liberals and radicals "to throw their hats in the air."

Civil liberty in England proves to me that the "Socialist" government there has been so timid and apologetic in its reforms that reaction is secure and feels

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no necessity of starting trouble. If fundamental reforms occurred, the government would find that saboteurs and fascists would have to be incarcerated or "all hell would break loose."

After reading the "cold war" articles in the *New Republic* of September 15 by Leland Stowe, Constantine Poulos, and others, Margaret Marshall's sorry article reads like an unfortunate "wish piece" for Christian Scientists.

FELOMINA IRAND OSINSKI

Dayton, Ohio, September 16

Challenge to the Race

Dear Sirs: Miss Marshall's article in *The Nation* of September 13 is the most clear picture of what is going on in the Western world that I have read since reading Toynbee.

Indeed, it is a challenge not only to American liberals but to the human race, or at least to that section of it that we call the West. L. COLIN SUMMER

Maplewood, N. J., September 12

Hits the Nail

Dear Sirs: I was so glad to read Margaret Marshall's article, Socialism, Communism, and the West. I am just back from three months in Europe meeting with leaders and studying conditions there. It seems to me that Miss Marshall has hit the nail right on the head. It has become the habit for many liberals to decry the Social Democrats of Europe, not seeing that in so doing they were repudiating the democratic method. Miss Marshall has done a splendid job in focusing attention on the importance of the British experiment.

I welcomed the article also for the inferential approach that it gives to the support by progressives of the Marshall plan. Many liberals are opposing the Marshall plan, or refusing to support it until they know every detail. To take such a position in this hour of crisis in Western Europe is to help defeat support for Western socialism. Progressives must be in there pitching for the Marshall plan and seeing that it is used in the most constructive manner.

HOWARD Y. WILLIAMS

St. Paul, Minn., September 17

Nothing to Shout About

Dear Sirs: Margaret Marshall is unduly astonished at the failure of liberals and intellectuals in America to throw their hats in the air and shout themselves hoarse at the triumph of socialism in Great Britain. It is true that there was premature shouting and celebrating when the Soviet revolution put in an appearance. It is precisely because our liberals and intellectuals have since discovered that their shouting was premature, because they find themselves now compelled to shout in a different tone, that they are a bit more careful in their applause of the English "revolution."

We have seen that merely taking on the label of socialism does not usher in the millennium. When tyranny of the worst order is being practiced in the name of socialism in one country, there is nothing to be jubilant about when another group of Socialists makes its appearance on the stage in a different country. Our liberals and intellectuals can be depended upon to do their share of applauding twenty or thirty years hence if the British brand of socialism ushers in a better way of life than their people had under capitalism or the Russian people have been "blessed" with under the Russian brand of socialism.

So far one feels that the old Russian adage, "May God help us if a mujik should become a lord," has proved to be correct. I doubt whether the worst Tory could have acted more heartlessly with the Jewish refugees than the so-called Socialist Bevin.

J. ANTHONY MARCUS

Rye, N. Y., September 12

Bed Rock

Dear Sirs: Margaret Marshall's British Socialism, Soviet Communism, and the West is the best article *The Nation* has printed in twelve years. One may not

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agree with it in every respect, but the important thing is that it gets down to liberal bed rock for our times. I hope there will be more like it.

SIDNEY HOOK

Brooklyn, September 22

Exciting and Important

Dear Sirs: Miss Marshall's article on British Socialism, Soviet Communism, and the West is by far the finest political article I have read this year—most exciting and extremely important. I hope this is one thing that everyone will see. It should have a decisive influence on public opinion. VAN WYCK BROOKS

Chilmark, Mass., September 15

[*Letters commending the article, in much the same terms as those above, were also received from Alan Willard Brown, Jule Brousseau, Michael M. Davis, Herman Eberling, Albert Guérard, T. Swann Harding, Charles A. Johnson, Ralph de Toledano, Lionel Trilling, and Robert A. Young.*]

Ickes Did Something

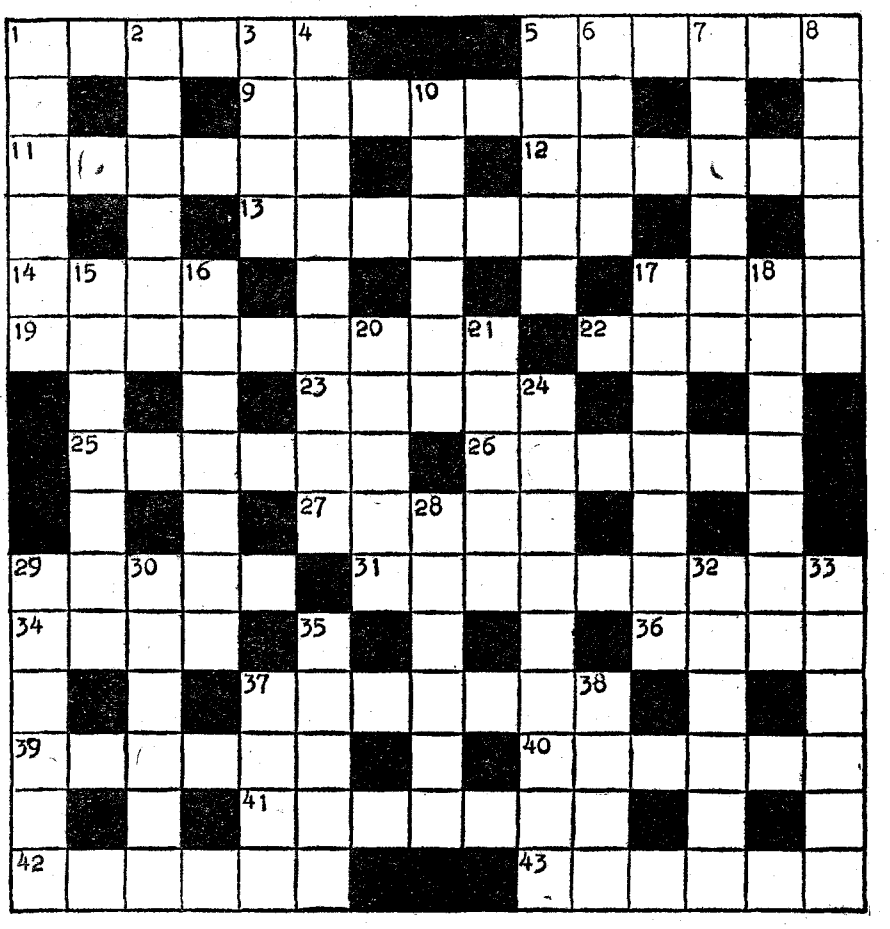
Dear Sirs: Richard Neuberger performed a public service, in *The Nation* of August 30, in calling attention to the unconscionable exploitation of the native fishermen of Alaska by absentee corporations. It is a pity, however, that Mr. Neuberger has slipped up on a few facts which need to be understood if protests against "absentee ownership" are not to be misaddressed.

First, it is inaccurate to say that "although Harold Ickes as Secretary of the Interior was in charge of the Fish and Wildlife Service for more than a decade, he did nothing to return the salmon industry to Alaskans." During the six and one-half years—not "more than a decade"—from July 1, 1939, when the Bureau of Fisheries was transferred to the Department of the Interior, until February 15, 1946, when Secretary Ickes resigned, the following important steps were taken by him to return the salmon industry to Alaskans:

1. On February 13, 1942, Secretary Ickes approved an opinion of his solicitor, Judge Margold, declaring that salmon-trap sites on native beaches belonged to the natives.

2. On March 20, 1942, Secretary Ickes asked the Attorney General to pass upon a second solicitor's opinion holding that the absentee owners who now monopolize the Alaskan trap sites, and

CROSSWORD PUZZLE No. 231 By MR. Y.



[SPECIAL NOTICE! This is the fifth of six puzzles constructed by Mr. Y in competition with Mr. X. At the end of the competition, *The Nation's* regular crossword puzzle man will be selected on the basis of letters sent in by puzzle-solving readers.]

ACROSS

1 It is not true that films do it in the showing. (6)
5 Listen to this! (6)
9 Air in the Highlands. (7)
11 Accidents will. (6)
12 When it sounds, the Caledonian comes back in. (6)
13 Papers are so sired. (7)
14 A large number to slay in the past. (4)
17 Give up? It sounds like a grain. (4)
19 Plays airs with loss of power. (9)
22 A bothersome kind of wart. (5)
23 Founder of a republic. (5)
25 Its grounds are not kept. (6)
26 Not one of the in-laws. (6)
27 Even passed hands are. (5)
29 Carroll initiated a hunt for it. (5)
31 Sailors found them impressive (but not the newspaper crowd). (5-4)
34 This writer is keyed-up. (4)
36 Londoner's hedge for a border. (4)
37 Celia is one, and shows it. (7)
39 Does it make a pilot shake? (6)
40 These are of little account in Russia. (6)
41 Eternally searches for food? (7)
42 Get after a sailor, if he hits it. (6)
43 Cretan delicacy. (6)

DOWN

1 Shun Pa to unlock it. (6)
2 This Jack was not popular in London. (6)
3 Is this monkeyed with? (4)
4 Set up and upset, it's plied to N. Y. (9)
5 Behaved in part. (5)
6 His day might bode a thundershower. (4)
7 Time for an egg, as a teaser. (6)
8 Does it go with Spanish locks? (6)
10 Foreign sort of airs about the United States. (6)
15 The judge sometimes finds this grand! (7)
16 K-rations? (7)
17 It's necessary to acquire a faculty for this. (7)
18 Rather sketchy representation. (7)
20 Blessings on him that first invented—" Don Quixote. (5)
21 Purloined neck-piece. (5)
24 Descriptive of the loser of the debate? (9)
28 A car in a wreck? This might come in handy! (6)
29 Strict when it's laced? (6)
30 Might seem to be fruit under a press. (6)
32 Coming years give expression to this. (6)
33 A kind of boiler. (6)
35 Topic covered at a sewing-bee. (5)
37 Not the dead file. (4)
38 Comparatively plain, on the face of things. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 230

ACROSS:—1 SHELF; 6 BRAID; 9 OTHELLO; 10 AMEER; 11 ROGER; 12 CARAVAN; 16 TASSEL; 19 GEARED; 22 ADORATION; 23 SNOW; 24 IAGO; 25 BUGLE CALL; 26 ESAU; 27 IRAN; 28 CRITERION; 31 PACKED; 33 OREADS; 36 DENTINE; 39 HOSEA; 40 GLOOM; 41 CALYPSO; 42 WHEAT; 43 NYASA.

DOWN:—1 START; 2 EVENS; 3 FORCED; 4 CHAR; 5 SLAV; 6 BORNEO; 7 AUGER; 8 DARED; 13 ALONGSIDE; 14 ABASEMENT; 15 AGITATION; 17 AMNESIA; 18 SAWBUCK; 20 ANILINE; 21 ENGLAND; 29 REDACT; 30 OREGON; 31 PSHAW; 32 CASTE; 34 ADOWA; 35 SAMBA; 37 NILE; 38 IMPS.

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thereby control the world's salmon supply could be regulated, as other fishermen are regulated, by the imposition of maximum trap and catch limits. The Attorney General, on April 8, 1942, concurred in Solicitor Margold's anti-monopoly opinion.

3. On July 15, 1944, Secretary Ickes ordered hearings on Indian claims to a number of trap sites occupied by absentee owners.

4. On July 27, 1945, Secretary Ickes decided, after extensive hearings and investigations, that eleven of these trap sites included shore lands belonging to natives, and this decision was reaffirmed on January 11, 1946.

3. On January 31, 1946, after an extensive study of the Alaska salmon monopoly, the Secretary promulgated regulations designed to break the monopoly's strangle-hold by limiting each company, with its affiliates and subsidiaries, to twenty traps, with notice that the maximum would be reduced over a five-year period to ten traps, and by throwing open all the surplus trap sites to newcomers, with preference to local communities and local cooperatives.

6. In the midst of hearings on the anti-monopoly regulations, and while the Indian communities were preparing to take over the trap sites to which they were entitled under the Ickes decisions, a new Secretary of the Interior arrived on the scene who has steadfastly refused to carry out the Ickes decisions in favor of Indian ownership of trap sites—and timber—and has refused with equal steadfastness to put any limit on the monopolists' power to hog as many of Alaska's trap sites, the most valuable areas left of our public domain, as they can hold by force, violence, and the sort of corruption that Mr. Neuberger describes.

But that is another story. Perhaps Mr. Neuberger will tell it. When he tells that story he should not forget to mention that Governor Gruening and Delegate Bartlett both protested vigorously against Secretary Ickes's anti-monopoly regulations. Governor Gruening at a public hearing on February 25, 1946, characterized the Ickes proposals to reestablish free enterprise as "drastic and revolutionary" and likely to create "confusion" (breaking up monopolies is always denounced as leading to "confusion"), and Delegate Bartlett attacked them as "disruptive."

FRANCES LOPINSKY

Washington, September 17

Tuna Is Better

Dear Sirs: Neuberger's Fish and Politics makes a good point (in your issue of August 30). On nutrition, however, Neuberger skates on thin ice. To say that salmon "has a greater nutritional value than almost any other food" is dubious enough. To give as evidence the testimony of one policeman is more so. The Department of Agriculture's Misc. Pub. 572, Tables of Food Composition, shows that tuna is better than salmon in calories, protein, fat, iron, and thiamine; and that canned corn beef and canned chicken are better in all those food elements but thiamine.

WILLIAM H. MORRIS

Garrett Park, Md., September 23

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